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1 June 1966

DCI BRIEFING NOTES

COMMUNIST CHINA -- DEVELOPMENTS IN  
THE LEADERSHIP STRUGGLE  
(since last briefing on 26 May)

- I. A shake-up of Mao Tse-tung's inner circle of advisers definitely appears to be taking place.
  - A. Last week we told you that we had been detecting signs that a behind-the-scenes power struggle was under way.
  - B. Mao Tse-tung's personal position still seems to be secure. His grip probably was loosened for a time during his recent 5½ month absence from public view, but he appeared to be healthy and alert in movies taken in early May.
  - C. This is what we now think about the status of his five top advisers:
    1. Peng Chen, sixth in the power structure, has probably been the victim of a power play engineered by his old rival Teng Hsiao-ping. He is still out of sight



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2. Teng is the powerful general secretary. Peng's removal would strengthen his position and likely weaken that of Liu Shao-chi who has been number two in the party since at least 1945. It is even possible that the highly militant and vigorous Teng has supplanted the colorless Liu as Mao's chosen successor.
3. The flexible Chou En-lai--China's Mikoyan --appears thus far to have managed to stay aloof from the fray. He is a useful technician and as such has a good chance to survive.
4. Contrary to Western press speculation, Defense Minister Lin Piao probably is not a contender for power. His name is often used to reinforce Mao's authority, but he has been chronically ill for nearly 30 years. Lin seemed to be extremely frail in recent movies taken with Mao Tse-tung. He probably does not aspire to the top job.

II. The Chinese Communists still haven't named any important victims.

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A. This indicates that the shake-up is still unfolding.

B. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Lo Jui-ching had been removed as army chief of staff two months or so ago. Lo, a top security man as well as chief of the army, is one of a group of key officials who have been out of public view for many months and who may have been casualties of the struggle. Others on the list are the head of the central committee's propaganda department and the commander of the Peking Military Region, who is Yang Yung.

C. On 26 May a deputy director of the Central Committee Propaganda Department was accused of backing an "antiparty" play produced in Shanghai. Certain other "muddleheaded" high officials were also said to have supported the play.

D. A new nationwide campaign has been developing this past week against unnamed high officials who have ridiculed the practical value of Mao Tse-tung's political tracts.

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1. One of the most widely publicized cases involves a Shanghai melon peddler who wrote an article in 1965 explaining how Mao's works had helped him sell his melons before they rotted. This article was republished on 14 May by Liberation Army Journal, which as we pointed out last week has been spearheading the attack on "antiparty" officials.
2. The melon peddler on 25 May then published a statement demanding the unmasking of a high official who, he said, had ridiculed his article.
3. A similar incident involving a ping pong player who claims he was greatly benefited by Mao's thinking has been widely publicized.
4. Referring to these incidents, Liberation Army Daily promised "to fight to the bitter end against anyone that strikes at Mao's thinking regardless of how powerful he may be, how high his position is, how famous, or how strong a backer he has."
- E. On 27 May "antiparty" charges were leveled for the first time against a provincial

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official. This was a vice governor of Shantung Province, who was also director of the cultural department of the provincial party committee. He was accused of working hand in glove with the group of conspirators in the Peking city apparatus whom we told you about last week. The charges against this man probably will lead to attacks on higher officials in Shantung and perhaps other provinces.

III. We still feel strongly that factions in the leadership have been disputing with one another.

A. This is indicated by the conflicting positions taken by various party newspapers over several of the crucial issues.

1. The initiative in launching the attacks has been consistently taken by Liberation Army Journal, not the Peoples Daily and Red Flag, normally the two most authoritative journals in China.
2. In fact Peoples Daily and Red Flag have at times directly opposed the army paper. A major charge implicating Peking Mayor Peng Chen has been that the journals of his municipal party committee refused to

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accept a dictum laid down by Liberation Army Journal on 29 November 1965 that a certain play was a quote big poisonous weed unquote.

3. Although the parallel has not yet been publicly drawn, we have checked and found that Peoples Daily and Red Flag also took the incorrect line of the Peking city journals. Our check also reveals that neither Peoples Daily nor Red Flag got around to labeling the play a poisonous weed until April.

- B. What the confusing record of these newspapers indicates to us is that Mao Tse-tung has been standing above the struggle while the acting party leader has been under attack by someone who controls the Liberation Army Journal.

1. During Mao's absence the acting party leader would be Liu Shao-chi.
2. Teng Hsiao-ping could control the army paper, which is not actually published by the army but by the army's General Political Department. This is directly

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subordinate to the party secretariat  
headed by Teng.

C. Since April Peoples Daily and Red Flag have  
both fallen in line with the army paper,  
a sign that Mao is again exercising a unify-  
ing influence.

1. The Liberation Army Journal continues  
to spearhead some attacks, however, sug-  
gesting that its backers still have ob-  
jectives they haven't yet reached.

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DCI BRIEFING NOTES

CUBA

- I. Fidel Castro's recent actions appear to result from deepening personal frustrations over the regime's continuing inability to surmount basic economic and administrative problems.
  - A. The administrative purge of a number of medium-level officials in the ministries of foreign affairs, foreign trade, and CUBANA airlines was designed to restore dynamism to Castro's regime and to revive revolutionary enthusiasm. It may have had the opposite effect, however.
    1. The March 7 to March 11 trial of Major Rolando Cubela, sentenced for plotting to assassinate Castro, probably had the same goal, as well as the aim of deterring other would-be plotters.
    2. Armed Forces Vice Minister Ameijeiras was dismissed on March 17. A drunkard and a marijuana user, he had long been in disfavor with the regime. Several top military commands have been routinely

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reshuffled since the first of the year;  
the principals involved were not cashiered  
and retain their prominence as political  
bureau members of Castro's Communist  
Party.

B. In his speech on March 13 at Havana University,  
Castro hurled new insults at Peking and charged  
that the Chinese leaders, in their old age,  
have confused Marxism-Leninism with fascism.  
The attack was essentially a reiteration of  
Castro's earlier statements and came exactly  
one year after his first criticism of China.

1. For the first time Castro has denounced  
President Eduardo Frei of Chile and his  
Christian Democratic Party.

a. He said that in Chile "the only way  
to win the revolutionary struggle  
will be by armed struggle," and he  
denounced Frei as a coward, a liar,  
and a reactionary. Havana radio has  
begun beaming a special propaganda  
program to Chile attacking Frei and  
his government.

b. The attacks reflect the same mili-  
tancy displayed at the January

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Tri-Continent Conference and indicate that Castro is losing interest in co-existence and compromise in the hemisphere.

C. The state of alert declared throughout Cuba on May 27 was ostensibly a Cuban reaction to US moves, the most outstanding of which was the killing of a Cuban soldier by a sentry at the Guantanamo Naval Base on May 21. In reality, there are indications that Cuba intended to provoke an incident with the US in order to reinforce its "anti-imperialist" posture and to divert the attention of the people from current economic difficulties.

1. The soldier was shot and killed by the US sentry after penetrating the base perimeter during a reconnaissance of a newly laid minefield. Such penetrations of the base perimeter have continued--presumably at the direction of the Cuban Government. Any additional incidents will further heighten the already tense situation on the island and provide the Castro regime with additional "justification" to demand greater sacrifices of the people.

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2. The alert also is probably intended to test the efficiency of the Cuban defensive system, provide realistic training for armed forces personnel, and flush out "counterrevolutionaries" unfortunate enough to misjudge the reasons for the alert.

II. Despite Castro's deepening frustrations, his position in Cuba remains pre-eminent.

- A. The large and efficient military and security forces under Raul Castro are strong and loyal to the regime. We think they are more than adequate as a defense against insurrection or invasion--barring substantial US assistance.
- B. The 55,000 members of the Cuban Communist Party are drawn from an elite core of Castro's most militant supporters. They form the regime's inner bureaucracy.

1. Last October Castro announced the formation of a political bureau, a secretariat, and five standing committees within a 100-man central committee.
2. The party controls provincial and local affairs, education and indoctrination, and the mass organizations.

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3. About one fifth of the party members and two thirds of the central committee members are from the Cuban armed forces.
  - C. Factionalism in the regime appears to be at its lowest level since Castro came to power.
    1. Nearly the entire top civilian and military leadership is included in the central committee.
      - a. About 20 prominent "old" Communists have gained added stature through membership.
      - b. There are no adherents of the economic policies of Che Guevara on the central committee.
  - D. Despite these factors contributing to the regime's stability, there is no doubt that the over-all political climate in Cuba has shifted somewhat in the past year. An air of uncertainty is prevalent in Havana which--if not checked--could lead to further disenchantment.
- III. Castro recognizes that he has no alternative to continued large-scale aid from the Soviet Union. As a result, he has continued to move closer to Moscow, and has cooled toward the Chinese.

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- A. The October visit of Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko to Cuba and Raul Castro's six-week visit to the USSR and Eastern Europe in October and November were probably generally aimed at reviewing Soviet-Cuban relations.
  - B. Castro probably no longer views all of Latin America as on the brink of revolution. He now limits clandestine Cuban support and concentrates it where revolutionaries are most active. Nevertheless, Cuban propaganda on behalf of armed revolution since the Tri-Continent Conference has reached a level of intensity not seen since 1963.
    - 1. Venezuela, Guatemala, and Colombia are Castro's three principal targets.
    - 2. In addition, Cuba has sent military personnel to help insurgents in the Congo, and to train other African revolutionaries in Brazzaville.
- IV. Ernesto "Che" Guevara, the former minister of industries, and the regime's foremost revolutionary, left the Cuban political scene last spring. He may also have left Cuba.

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- A. Guevara may be carrying out the pledge attributed to him by Castro to assist other revolutionary movements.
- B. Guevara's eclipse stemmed from differences with Castro over basic questions relating to the development of the Cuban economy, and to the attitude Cuba should take toward revolutionary activity elsewhere in the hemisphere.
- V. Cuba's economic performance remains spotty, and the long-range outlook is uncertain.
  - A. The 1965 sugar harvest of about 6 million tons surpassed the yearly harvest of the pre-Castro years.
    - 1. This demonstrated the effectiveness of wide economic and administrative reforms applied during 1965.
  - B. The 1966 harvest probably will be in the neighborhood of 4.5 million tons--2 million tons short of the goal. Severe drought has been blamed by Castro for this shortfall.
    - 1. The outlook for future sugar earnings is clouded by continuing harvesting and milling problems, and by uncertain world sugar prices.

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2. General economic mismanagement continues, although some improvement has been made in the past year.
3. Shortages in certain food and consumer goods may become worse in 1966, but Castro can continue to rely on large-scale Soviet assistance.

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